



**FROM THE BRIDGE . . .** Capt. George Kafes studies the waters at the Port of Muskegon in preparation to leaving for the Far East. The Greek skipper, an 11-year veteran of the high seas, likes sailing in the Great Lakes and says the Aristanax will return to Muskegon next summer for another load of lumber.

## Greek Skipper, 30, Likes Sailing on Great Lakes

By MIKE SKINNER

A seaman's life is a hard one, says George Kafes, 30-year-old skipper of the Greek ship Aristanax, which arrived in the Port City Sunday and left Thursday.

The dark-haired captain has been in charge of the ship, chartered by Japan's Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, since August. It arrived here to load a shipment of Brunswick bowling alley lumber. The vessel is owned by Michail Karageorgis, of Athens, Greece.

Mr. Kafes, a casually dressed skipper who speaks good English, says the most difficult part of a sailor's life is being away from home for so many months.

In speaking of his 20-man crew and contingent of 10 officers, he says: "People get

nervous; a captain must manage them in the correct way to keep everyone happy and satisfied. There must be goodwill."

But the youthful captain does not worry much about his all-Greek crew, for he says his men are experienced seamen and accept the rigors of their life.

"Greece is a maritime nation, you know," he explained. "Our traditions are linked to the seas. This life is familiar to us, and we accept it."

Born on the island of Limnos in the north Aegean Sea, Mr. Kafes spent most of his life swimming, fishing and sailing in waters once described by Homer as the "wine dark" seas.

He attended the Merchant Marine Academy in Athens, emerged as a cadet, began working on tankers, and since has circumnavigated the

globe five times. He has held the rank of captain since 1969.

Although he has visited most of the world's famous ports and many of its most historic cities, his favorite country remains his native land.

"For me," he says, "Greece is the best country. Everytime I go there, I enjoy myself. It is a beautiful country — the best land of all."

Capt. Kafes arrived in Muskegon for the first time, after the Aristanax laid off the channel for several days until the weather calmed. From here the ship is going to Montreal, then on to the Far East.

The vessel and her crew make three trips a year, two during the summer to the Great Lakes and a third during winter months to South America.

In between, Capt. Kafes returns to his beloved Greece, where his wife and three-year-old daughter await him.

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